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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
COMMUNICATIONS

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMCARE of Sedgwick County Receives Award

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – COMCARE of Sedgwick County's "1-2-3 for Life" program has been selected as the 1st Place winner in the Clinical Medicine category of the Eli Lilly "Moving Lives Forward" awards.

Adults with severe and persistent mental illness have a life expectancy nearly 20 years shorter than the general population, frequently dying in their fifties. Conditions that plague this group are often heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. Poverty and institutionalization have contributed to harmful lifestyles with little exercise and poor nutrition. In addition, some medications cause weight gain and some symptoms suppress the desire for activity or cause extreme fatigue. With this in mind, the designers of the initiative focused on simple lifestyle changes that anyone can easily incorporate into their daily routine but which could have dramatic impact over time on weight and general health.

"1-2-3 for Life" is a health promotion initiative focusing on increasing daily physical activity and fruits and vegetable intake of adults living with serious mental illness. The acronym stands for: 1 Walk, 2 Fruits, 3 Vegetables (daily) for Life. Using buttons, posters and monthly diaries, COMCARE nurses, doctors, case managers, psychosocial rehabilitation staff, therapists and managers have joined with consumers to promote and practice healthier living to reduce chronic illnesses and improve general wellness.

This exciting new program was developed by COMCARE's Community Support Services in collaboration with the University of Kansas Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Kansas State Research and Extension Office of Community Health, and Eli Lilly Pharmaceuticals.

COMCARE will be presented this award, along with \$5,000 for the continued support of the program at a conference in November.

"COMCARE is a great resource for citizens with mental illness," said Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Tim Norton. " We are very proud that COMCARE has received this award for their work on this program. This is a good example of how County employees joined the effort with the consumers to set an example and improve physical and mental health."

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